

CLARK COUNTY ANIMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Whitney Community Center
5712 Missouri, Community Room
Las Vegas, Nevada 89122
July 25, 2006
6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: GLASSMAN, MYRA LEE (MG)
HUTT, FREDERICK (FH)
OLSEN, DENNIS (DO)
SONDEJ, KEN (KJ)
POOLER, TOM (TP)
YOUNG, BILLIE (BY)

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Approval of agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made and seconded.

3. Approval of April 25, 2006 Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded.

4. Update on License Plate Sterilization Funds

DAVE MARCH (DM) – disbursement made of \$9,000. Currently have \$6,284 in new funds in the account. No new requests for funds have been made.

TP - Outreach program for homeless people; resolution for shelter facility or humane group if funds would be available to spay/neuter their animals. DO – turn over to Heaven Can Wait or other org to give motive to people to take animals and get done. Heaven Can Wait goes on the spot. DM – he is referring to a specific event for resources for homeless at Cashman Field in November - invite homeless people to come down for resources. One of the things they want to offer is veterinary care. Mobile emergency shelter may do some microchipping. Information phase, do not know what we will be able to offer or if we can get veterinary personnel to do it. Similar to Rotunda Thunda. MG – wonders about value of microchipping animals if owner is homeless. Greatest difficulty would be proving they owned the animal. DM - If done at one of the events, their name would be associated with the microchip. We wouldn't be able to find them but could prove they own animal. DO – speak with rescue orgs and see if they can be there. DM - we hope to be able to get with them to do some of that work as well as basic vet checks to make sure animal is in good shape. We are shooting for Wednesday, November 8, 2006.

BY – is there some way we can help them out to coordinate this? DM – It is just starting. KAREN (KL) LAYNE (LVVHS) – we always provide spay/neuters for people who cannot afford and pay full cost. We have been contacted by social service agencies to provide help for homeless people before. If we are contacted, we can apply the vouchers. We would pay the full cost. That would not be an issue for us nor do I imagine it would be for Heaven Can Wait. That is what we do. We have expended about \$1,250 so far so we still have some we can use for that. We can apply for

additional funds if they use all that money.

MG – there are a number of metropolitan areas where there is a specific outreach program to deal with pets of homeless people. In addition to spay/neuter and vaccination, they encourage to give animal to foster care until they get their life together. Some homeless won't go to shelter because they cannot bring the animal. With rescue groups, can that be worked out to put animals in foster care temporarily? KL – we don't have a shelter, we are mostly volunteer. We are maxed out in terms of fosters. We would not be able to perform that kind of a function. I am not sure we would want to. We are saying to the homeless you don't deserve a dog until you find a home. We are willing to help with spay/neuter but cannot provide foster home. We do for domestic violence but we have to look at case by case. MG – we have enough groups here that it would be helpful if we would get groups together and come up with a way to pool resources to deal with problem. If you are not going to shelter to get back on track because of animal, perhaps we can put it in someone's home temporarily until you get your life together and take it back. Don't know if it is realistic in Las Vegas.

KS – not realistic at all. If we have foster homes, animals would not be dying in shelters. Would have to find your own foster homes. Rescues are loaded.

5. Update on Dangerous and Vicious Animals Ordinance

DM – it is enacted and official. DO – in section 10.16.030 (f) – implantation must be performed by licensed vets. Their technicians will be doing that not the vet. DM – intent was to be done by the vet's office. We don't want someone setting up shop to implant microchips. All officers have been provided with it and been instructed to become familiar and enforce.

6. Update on Ordinance to Amend Title 10 to Allow Release of Dogs and Cats and other Small Animals to the Designated Animal Shelter Contract

DM – that has passed as well. Allows shelter greater flexibility with outcomes. Can give away for free. For more desirable pets they can charge more. Price will be dropped if have a long time. Probably advantageous to get animals out of shelter if for no other reason than disease exposure. They seem to be pleased with the change. We will get reports from them as time goes on as to how effective it is.

7. Information-sharing by Committee Members

KS – heard from John Fredericks. He is concerned about lack of manpower for enforcement and neglect and abuse laws being poorly written. DO – all concerned about staffing levels at AC. DM- Cruelty statutes are written at a minimum standard. I am sure nobody in this room keeps their animals at the minimum standard. If committee wants to rework, that is why you are here. Stronger they get, the more people we need to enforce. Can keep animal at minimum standard and not be keeping them cruelly according to law. MG – what does he want? How can he help us get more funding so we have more staffing at Animal Control? I went to budget hearings. But I am just one person. He is in the media. He can get public involved, do some lobbying. We all agree there is not adequate staffing. As far as cruelty as they stand, we have a bigger problem with judges that need to be educated. KS – enforcement of the law, prosecution of the law and even title 574 for state, we are having amended this session, I understand what the problem is. AC builds the case; judge looks at and says it is only a dog, who cares. Give me \$5 and here is your animal back. MG – I have to throw it back to him. He is in the media. We are all concerned and doing what we can. Would like some help from him. Now we have to address the problem, which is prosecution. Title 10, second offense misdemeanor should be a gross. DM – would have to be under 574 of NRS to be a gross misdemeanor. KS – low grade felony on second to high-grade felony on third - on third offense, loss of ability to own an animal.

BY – public has asked that we look into making minimal definitions for things such as shelter being provided - that is a beautiful patio but does not provide shade or tree no where near the animal to provide shelter. Define so animal can get out of triple digit heat. FH – what is definition of minimum standards? DM – minimum standards are currently in the code. If you have a patio cover that could reasonably protect animal from sun, would probably fit standard. We don't have elements of cold to threaten animals' well being. Doghouses not best place when 115. How do you rework so beneficial to animal. Not sure what it would look like. FH – is there a way to write up a minimum standard and let people know what it is. People are apathetic about animals. I know someone with 20 or 30 cats in the house been offered to spay/neuter. Won't cause "children or grandchildren" want to play. DM – If in officer's opinion it becomes a cruel condition, it can be treated. FH – being understaffed as you are, you don't have time to investigate. So many complaints, so many things to be done, difficult to keep up, nothing in writing that can be advertised all over county. DM – there is not much to even advertise as far as shelter. Shelter for horses is not in Title 10 but in Title 30 and PRO makes them put up shelters for horses. Title 10 uses appropriate for species. Only thing we can make stick is a bald horse, run into issue does it really need shelter. Mustangs are in the prairie. Education for judges. Difficult all the way around. What is nature of shelter needed? DM - if committee wants to take up issue of shelter, depending on what you come up with, we will come up with a reasonable # of officers to make it happen. We want it to be effective and to enforce it. BY – would it be helpful to define and push for better care. DM – even changing definition could result in an increased workload. When we get there animal appears to be well fed, appears not to be distressed, those standards are difficult. If significant impact, we may have to go to BCC and say in order to take on this responsibly we will need this number of FTE. DO – we have to be careful if we start setting rules and regulations. Then we get into opinion. We cannot do that. If we regulate how people take care of animals, too much like big brother. We can't say you can't keep your animal in that space without... we have to be careful. We would become the bad guy. We can set minimum standards. Left to officers to use education and judgment to say whether cruel and then to judges. We have to be conscious about setting up how we say who can do what. BY – are minimum standards sufficient? DO - open to interpretation but can be interpreted in favor of animal. Officers are well trained, can use that education to see if minimum standards are met. DM – do some research on line to see what other jurisdictions have and see if there is something that is not so restrictive. If you required every doghouse to have an air conditioner, people may not own pets. You may find some standards that are better. If you find, bring back and put on for discussion. TP – education for ACOs. DM – every one of officers is ICS 100 and NIMS 700 trained. Every one of officers and dispatchers has that training. NACA 100, which is introductory, and then we send them to NACA II, cruelty or horse abuse school. Swift water rescue school. We are all for education to help us in what we do. We have gotten to the point regarding equine, we can send any officer for an initial look, if borderline, we send someone who has been to equine cruelty school so we are in a better position to be more specific. Same for other cruelties, if unsure they can contact Sr. Animal Control Officer Greg Wallen who was a USDA inspector for 18 years. He looks specifically at exotic. Spread knowledge and education around as much as possible.

MG – John Fredericks- would like to see staffing provided by county so we can go ahead with anti-tethering and he could be a big help about why tethering animals is a bad thing for animals and for public. Increasing dangerousness of animal. Hopefully at some point through public pressure and lobbying maybe we will get county to fund 2 additional officers needed to enforce anti-tethering. KS – tethering – are points that should be readdressed and looked at again. Especially in pack of pick up truck, must have exception for ranchers who move dogs from field to field. Most dogs have to ride in back of truck. With the current bill, their animals can be confiscated. DM – we have a regulation requiring dogs be tethered in back of trucks since about 1990. If you want to add exemption, could talk about. DM – never run across a rancher with working dogs. So rare, hate to put exemption on books where someone sees it there, and use it.

Better off leaving to officers' discretion. Leaving as is, only place would have affect would be in Overton, Logandale area and things run a little different in North Country.

BY – was unable to be at May 15 meeting due to an accident. MG – essentially representative of committee, no one else was there. Referred to statistics and testified about how poorly staffed they are. Pointed out AAC has worked hard on exotic animal ordinance, came up with good one but not enacted because no staff. Worked on anti-tethering and passed and was tabled due to no staff. These are issues for public safety and welfare. Said my peace, Myrna Williams said we didn't understand they have other priorities. DM – in the behind the scenes discussion, your testimony moved some of the members. Currently through position review committee, they are trying to find a vacant position to give to animal control. When that happens, we will go forward with exotic ordinance. Efforts did not go on deaf ears.

DM – The zoning committee is taking up issues of animal breeding. They are adding animal breeding as a home occupation that may require breeders to obtain a use permit for their property. It will be on the next agenda and a presentation will be made from zoning about having a use permit for breeding dogs and cats. MG – if we can hit them with zoning that helps us. DM – we do periodically go through Sunday paper and contact them in ads, some won't tell us where they live. They say meet me at the corner of and I will guide you in from there. MG – volunteer to go in an unmarked vehicle. Getting smarter so more difficult for us to be proactive. A lot of it is in NLV and Henderson. MG – ads come from Utah also and Pahrump.

8. **Comments by the General Public**

DR. DAVID HENDERSON – if enforcing the breeding law, we have tons of people for you to investigate. DM – Call and we can put in chameleon system and we will get someone out there.

KAREN LAYNE – animal cruelty, what is committee going to do. 95 percent of our calls have to do with animal cruelty issues. We tell them to call Animal Control. Invariably, it is minimum standards that continue to be a huge issue but I think we have to look at what actually provides shelter. Something that provides shade at 9 in the morning does not provide shade at 3 in the afternoon. People are angry and perceive government as not protecting animals. This is not the 1990's. We have new population and a cultural issue. Some of these issues may need to be readdressed. As much as I know we have other issues, you can't just let this issue go. Are you going to do anything? BY – a good point, if there are other codes or ordinances in other areas that would be a better minimum to consider in our area. I was planning on doing some research and would like to see something to look at and consider. MG –sorry Californian's are angry. Certain tradition in NV that people don't want to be told what to do. When you try to dictate, we get into questions of constitutionality in NV. If Californians don't like our culture, they can go back to CA. If they have a suggestion on how to improve they have to give hard data and not just say how angry they are. KS – CA Senate passed 861 bills last year, all involved in lawsuits. All the laws are unconstitutional.

BRUCE HAALSTEAD (Bruce) - how are dogs in back of pick up tied down? DM – code is not specific for harness. Bruce would like to see it specific for harness. DM - part of difficulty becomes METRO. We cannot pull you over on traffic stop. Truthfully, this needs to go to state legislature to make impact. So difficult for us to try to enforce. MG – if I recall there was an effort on state to make it illegal to have dogs in back of pickups and ranchers up north complained. Lawmakers listened by allowing them but tethering them. They are unprotected. Construction debris on road, rocks flying up in the air, no protection. Needs to be changed on state level due to enforcement issues. Nobody is enforcing. What we need is some grassroots lobbying at state level to make illegal to transport in pick up truck unless in protected kennel and not at all in summer. Bruce – some counties require a seat belt or harness. Can understand trying to help homeless

people with animals, they are there due to budget cuts. Only thing keeping them alive is their animal. Take away or coerce into surrendering could set off deep end and they try to harm themselves. Am for finding a way to help.

FH – not taking animals away. All volunteer. Some of these people, that is all they live for. If they want to foster until they get their life together. Dr. Glassman is not trying to force.

KS – use Katrina as to what possible foster homes would be. Lawsuits of people from New Orleans animals shipped out, adopted and trying to get their animals back and being accused of animal abuse. This could open same situation if foster home deemed owner is unqualified. Offer whatever help we can without removing animals.

PATTI PICKERD (PP)& MELINDA SCHMIDT (MS) - problems seem to be enforcement and judges being lenient. How can we educate police officers and courts in regard to better enforcement of those laws? How can we make judges more aware and justify harsher sentences? KS – every other November replace or leave sit. If don't do what majority of people want, replace them. MG – meet and greets people arrange for candidates, forums, biggest activity is for sheriff. Judges campaign too and we need to get people out there to tell them; to ask where they stand on that issue. We can look at how their decisions have gone. They need to be confronted. BY – they're involved in animal programs within their own, may shed some light. Sheriff's office has canine and mounted unit so they would have some experience in animals in some cases. TP – letters to judges voicing opinion. DO – you are talking about general public as well. If general public doesn't have it, get people educated. How many people are in attendance tonight? Not a good example of public education. MS - Judges are in position to enforce. DO – won't do anything until they are brought to task by people. MG – we have an obligation to educate neighbors and friends. One of the problems in Las Vegas, people are not involved. They complain, get angry but don't want to do what needs to be done. Not all can be legislated. Some education. Get into grade schools and do presentations. PP – education starts at home. KS -Silver State Kennel looking for ways to get education out to public. What kind of basic information do you want public to be educated with. What line do you take to general public and then at that point you can make changes. This year we are looking at doing something with public. TP – CC has had a program for years. KS – friend who has an educational program. Having trouble getting it into schools. DO – education important aspect. We are now starting classes for the general public. Problem is do people want it or are they going to take the time. That may not be high on the priority list. Somehow has to come from others that will make a priority. Probably not on list unless bit on butt.

BRUCE HAALSTEAD – other stations do some info, rules in dog Fancier Park taken down. Put inside bathrooms. Put messages out. DM – done by Parks & Rec. BH – there are other media people who can help us out. KS – John Fredericks willing to help if he can. FH – open mike shows on radio can be used to educate the public. The more you talk, the more people will learn. MG – major pet food companies have newsletters and have extensive reference library available on their website regarding animal care and training and you can print out to share with your neighbors and friends.

9. Set date, time and agenda of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for October 24, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. at the Paradise Community Center

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

